

Grace Episcopal Church  
Scripture 202b: Adult New Testament Bible Study  
Lesson 7: Paul's Early Writings & Missionary Journeys Part 1  
Easter 7, Wednesday, May 23, 2012

**Tonight:**

Prayer

Devotion based on Ephesians 4:1 – 16 (from today's Daily Office)

Revisit Pauline Theology with Discussion

Paul's Early Writings and Missionary Journeys (as time permits)

Compline

Next Week: Romans; NOAB Notes

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1 Thessalonians

Most feel this is the first book written in New Testament

Pastoral Letter – Letter from Paul as Pastor to a congregation he founded

Paul quotes Law of Moses, psalms of David, and the prophets

\*Note overview of the Letter on p. 2074 of NOAB

Powell notes that

- Thessalonica and Philippi were in Macedonia (Map 13 – on Greek Peninsula) and Thessalonica was capital city of Macedonia. 100,000 people. One of best natural harbors on Aegean Sea.
- Paul came there during 2<sup>nd</sup> Missionary Journey in 48-51 CE. Note Acts 17:2-4 showing Paul preaching in synagogue.
- Outreach to Gentile idol worshippers. Paul, Silas (Silvanus), and Timothy might have rented a store front to do leatherwork and tentmaking and allowed for a place of gathering and discussion.
- His preaching is more than good advice rather doctrine of the Living and One true God, Jesus is raised from the dead – who died for them, saved from God's wrath.
- Themes
  - The conduct of Paul's ministry – courage in midst of opposition, did not compromise on God's message. Devote to the Thessalonians and not a burden

- Honor and Shame – Converts were heretics to the Jews, Gentiles saw them as unpatriotic, irreligious, and anti-social.
- Sexual Morality – Live in order to please God. Need to be holy and honorable despite the new ideals of chastity and monogamy.
- Working for a Living – Paul urges the church to work with their hands and earn their own keep as he did, don't revert to idleness and laziness. Maybe community quit jobs in anticipation of the end times
- Death of believers prior to the Parousia - the dead will rise and then all believers, living and dead in Christ will be caught up into the clouds to meet the Lord in the air (4:16-17)

Letter is to be valued more for its contributions to Christian life rather than deep theological doctrine.